

Construction Site Erosion Control

Guiding Principles, Practices & Policies

1. Site planning issues:

- Plan to “fit” the development to the site without excessive grading, etc.
- Minimize size of disturbed area/loss of trees & other vegetation cover. Delineate area to be disturbed (building envelopes for small sites), field stake and monitor.
- Avoid naturally steep slopes or planned cut/fill slopes greater than 3h:1v.
- Identify, survey, map and protect on/off-site natural resources (environmental corridors, water resources/wetlands, steep slopes, bedrock, groundwater, etc.)
- Locate and design access drives to prevent washouts.
- Locate soil stockpiles at least 25’ from water resources and channel flows.

2. Plan to minimize the time the disturbed soil is exposed to erosion:

- Recognize seeding deadlines (Sept. 15 permanent grass, Oct. 15 oats/wheat/rye).
- Phase large construction projects/topsoil & seed dormant areas.
- Sequence construction to allow seeding & avoid redistributing areas.
- Require “inactive” construction sites to be stabilized.

3. Control soil erosion & sedimentation during construction:

- Divert upslope/downspout runoff around the construction site if needed.
- Protect access drives, inlets, stockpiles and site perimeter from sediment.
(*Note: Silt fences only work for small drainage areas/overland flows.*)
- Install sediment basins for large construction sites (>5 acres), which can also serve as permanent wet detention basins to manage post-construction storm water.
- Plan for site dewatering/pumping if applicable (sediment basin).
- Clean up street/off-site sediment/tracking daily.
- Use watering to control wind erosion on large open sites/sandy soils.

4. Stabilize the site ASAP (3-7 days)

- Encourage landscapers to closely follow final grading activities for quicker stabilization.
- Follow stabilization standards for road ditches/slopes (mulch/netting/matting/sod/rock).
- Armor storm inlets and outlets to protect from erosion (sod, rip rap, etc.).
- Apply 4-6” of topsoil to all areas to be seeded. Truck it in if necessary.
- Seed, fertilize and mulch all disturbed areas (at a minimum). Apply polymer as needed.
- Remove temporary erosion control practices (silt fences, hay bales, etc.)

5. Follow local ordinances and policies to control soil erosion:

- Plan rural road construction projects to finish before September 15 to allow grass swales to be stabilized before the end of the growing season.
- Seed down cropland before developing rural subdivisions to minimize the runoff/erosion.
- Specify acceptable utility placement to avoid channel erosion.
Note: require utility easements or ROW placement at shoulder edge
- Encourage channel stabilization and landscaping to occur before paving to reduce runoff in channels and other areas during seed germination stage.